No Thank You!

A pocket therapy guide on healthy boundaries and how to set them

This guide was created by a being named Tea.
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Ways to Say "No"

"I am not comfortable with this"

"I've decided not to"

"Please don't do that"

"This doesn't work for me"

"I'm drawing the line at _____"

"I don't want to do that"

"Not at this time"

"I can't do that for you"

What are Personal Boundaries?

Personal boundaries are limits and rules we set for ourselves within relationships.

A person with healthy boundaries can say "no" to others when they want to, but they are also comfortable opening themselves up to intimacy and close relationships.

Listen to Your Emotions

Try to understand your feelings of discomfort or resentment, often they can be traced back to mistreatment.

Be Respectful

Avoid yelling, using put-downs, or the silent treatment. It is okay to be firm but your message will be better received if you are respectful.

Emotional boundaries refer to a person's feelings. They are violated when your feelings are criticized, belittled, or invalidated

Sexual boundaries refer to the emotional, intellectual, and physical aspects of sexuality. They are violated by unwanted sexual touch, pressure, leering, or commentary.

Boundary Setting Examples

"I understand that I normally drive you places but it has been hard for me to plan around, can you please give me more warning when you need a ride?"

"I know that you enjoy showing me affection in public but I feel uncomfortable acting that way in front of my coworkers. Can we keep it to cheek kisses when I'm at work please?"

"I get that you really like my sweater but I'm not comfortable with you wearing it. This is where I got it if you want to buy your own."

Plan Ahead!
It helps to think about what you want to say, and how you will say it, before discussing it.

Your boundaries can be influenced by your setting. Something that is appropriate at home may not be at your place of work.

Your culture can also influence your personal boundaries. Depending on how you were raised, you may find things such as your feelings or physical affection easier or harder to express.

Keep in mind that some people may feel upset or angry when you set a boundary.

They may think that you setting a boundary for one type means you are setting a boundary for another *(eg. you told your partner not to kiss you at work so they think you no longer want them to show you sexual attention)*.

Be sure to communicate as clearly as possible while still staying firm to the boundary you are setting.

Healthy Boundaries

- Values own opinions
- Doesn't compromise values for others
- Shares personal information in an appropriate way
- Knows personal wants and can communicate them
- Accepting when others say "no" to them.

It is common to have mixed boundary types.

For example, you can have healthy boundaries at work, porous boundaries in romantic relationships, and a mix of all three with your family.

Types of Boundaries

Physical boundaries refer to personal space and physical touch. They are violated by unwanted touch or invading your personal spaces such as a locker or bedroom.

Intellectual boundaries refer to thoughts and ideas. They are violated when someone dismisses or belittles your thoughts or ideas.

Material boundaries refer to money and possessions. They are violated when someone steals/damages your things or they pressure you to give/lend things to them.

Time boundaries refer to how a person uses their time. They are violated when a person demands too much of your time.

Use Confident Body Language

Face the other person and speak in a steady tone that is not too quiet or loud. Say "no" respectfully but without ambiguity.

Compromise (if appropriate)

Listen and consider the needs of the other person. You never have to compromise, but give-and-take is a part of any healthy relationship.

Tips for Healthy Boundaries

Know Your Limits

Before getting involved in a situation, know what you are okay doing and what you are not. Be as specific as possible.

Know Your Values

Your limits are defined by your values. Determine what is important to you and build boundaries to protect them.

Boundary Traits

Rigid Boundaries	Porous Boundaries
• Avoids intimacy and close relationships • Unlikely to ask for help • Very protective of personal information • May seem detached, even with romantic partners • Keeps others at a distance to avoid rejection	• Overinvolved with others' problems • Difficulty saying "no" • Overshares personal information • Dependent on the opinions of others • Accepting of abuse or disrespect • Compliant to avoid rejection

How to Set a Boundary

Acknowledgement

Let the person know your understanding of their situation.

"I know that you are used to..."

Assertiveness

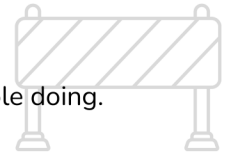
Inform the person about why you are uncomfortable.

"But it makes me feel..."

Alternatives

Offer a solution that you are comfortable doing.

"Can we instead try/do..."

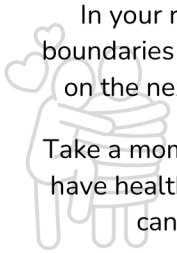


Boundary Exploration

Think of a person, or group of people, that you struggle to set healthy boundaries with.

In your relationship with them, consider your boundaries for all the different types. Use the chart on the next page to get a better understanding.

Take a moment to imagine what it would be like to have healthy boundaries with them and what you can to do improve your boundaries.



	Porous	Rigid	Healthy	Other
Physical				
Intellectual				
Emotional				
Sexual				
Material				
Time				